

REMARKS

The Official Action of January 24, 2003 has been carefully considered and reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The specification has been amended at page 13 to correct an inadvertent clerical error. The error and the correction would have been clear to those of skill in the art from the application as filed and, in particular, from the subject sentence which begins with "**Although** the weight average molecular weight (Mw)/number average molecular weight (Mn) is **preferably** 2 or more. . ." Accordingly, the correction is respectfully considered not to introduce any new matter into the specification.

Claim 6 has been amended according to the disclosure at page 13, lines 14-15, whereby to remove the basis for the rejection at paragraph 2(a) of the Official Action. Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate therein the recitations formerly in claim 10 and claim 10 has been canceled. Claim 8 and the recitations formerly in claim 10 have been amended to remove the narrower recitations within the broader recitations whereby to remove the basis for the rejection at paragraph 2(b) of the Official Action. All claims as amended are believed to be sufficiently definite to satisfy the dictates of 35 USC 112, second paragraph.

New claim 22 has been added more completely to define the subject matter which Applicant regards as his invention. Specific examples of saccharides which can

be used in combination with the recited saccharide-alkyleneoxy derivative of formula (1) are enumerated in the specification as filed at page 15, line 5 to page 16, line 17. "Glycerol" is described at page 16, line 3.

The amendment to claim 4 to incorporate the recitations formerly in claim 10 removes the bases for the prior art rejections appearing at paragraphs 3-8 and 11 of the Official Action. Indeed, the only prior art rejection applied against the recitations formerly in claim 10 is the rejection under 35 USC 103(a) at paragraph 10 of the Official Action over any one of JP 59059755, JP 62015274, Iwata et al or Matrick et al in view of Sano et al. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

The claims as amended all require that the claimed ink comprises the recited saccharide-alkyleneoxy derivative comprising the compound represented by formula (1) **and** one or more of the recited C₃ to C₁₂ saccharides. However, each of the primary references cited by the Examiner describes, if at all, only the claimed saccharide-alkyleneoxy derivative whereas the secondary reference, Sano et al, describes only the saccharides such as glucose, mannose, and sorbital, listed at column 3, lines 48-67. A combination of Sano et al with one of the cited primary references, assuming for the sake of argument that the prior art provided a motivation for such combination, would result in the **substitution** of the saccharides described in Sano et al for the derivative described in the primary references. There would be no motivation, absent the hindsight provided by the present specification, to include in the combination **both** the recited saccharide-alkyleneoxy derivative and the recited saccharide. Accordingly,

even assuming for the sake of argument that the references cited by the Examiner are properly combinable, the combination would not arrive at the claimed invention. For this reason, it is respectfully submitted that the cited references do not set forth even a *prima facie* case of obviousness for the invention as claimed.

In view of the above, all rejections and objections of record are respectfully believed to have been successfully traversed and the application is believed to be in allowable form. An early notice of allowance is earnestly solicited and is believed to be fully warranted.

Respectfully submitted,

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Page 13, first full paragraph, please amend as follows:

The ink containing the saccharide-alkyleneoxy derivative or a mixture thereof having a molecular weight distribution tends to approach the Newtonian fluid, which preferably improves the discharge stability of the ink. Although the weight average molecular weight (Mw)/number average molecular weight (Mn) is preferably 2 or more, it is to be understood that less than 2 is not denied.

Claim 4 (amended) Ink containing at least a coloring material, water, and a saccharide-alkyleneoxy derivative comprising a compound represented by the following formula (1):



wherein A represents a skeleton of a saccharide selected from the group consisting of C₃ to C₁₂ aldoses, ketoses and sugar alcohols; EP represents an ethyleneoxy group and/or a propyleneoxy group; and n represents an average number of the repeating units, said ink further containing one or more C₃ to C₁₂ saccharides selected from the group consisting of: aldoses having 6 or fewer carbon atoms, aldoses having from 7 to 12 carbon atoms; ketoses having 6 or fewer carbon atoms, ketoses having from 7 to 12 carbon atoms; sugar alcohols having from 6 or fewer carbon atoms, and sugar alcohols having from 7 to 12 carbon atoms.

Claim 6 (amended) The ink according to claim 4, wherein said saccharide-

alkyleneoxy derivative has a [[distributed]] molecular weight distribution of 2 or more.

Claim 8 (amended) The ink according to claim 4, wherein A in said formula (1) is a skeleton of a saccharide selected from the group consisting of: aldoses having 6 or [[less]] fewer carbon atoms, [[including glyceraldehyde, erythrose, threose, arabinose, xylose, glucose, mannose, talose and galactose;]] aldoses having from 7 to 12 carbon atoms, ketoses having 6 or [[less]] fewer carbon atoms, [[including erythrulose, ribulose, xylulose, lactose, psicose, tagatose and sorbose; ketoses having from 7 to 12 carbon atoms;]] sugar alcohols having 6 or [[less]] fewer carbon atoms, [[including glycerol, erythritol, xylitol, sorbitol and mannositol;]] and sugar alcohols having from 7 to 12 carbon atoms.

Claim 11 (amended) The ink according to claim 4 [[10]], wherein said saccharide-alkyleneoxy derivative represented by formula (1) and said C₃ to C₁₂ saccharides are present, in total, in an amount of from 0.5% to 30% by weight based on the weight of said ink.